School of Education

Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
and Licensure Programs
Room 249, Education/Business Hall
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Durango, CO 81301
970-247-7291

May 28, 2020

Dear Kwiyagatu Community Academy:

Fort Lewis College School of Education is honored to write a letter of support and collaboration for the Kwiyagatu Community Academy. The Kwiyagatu Community Academy, a proposed Ute Mountain Ute language and culture charter school in Towaoc, Colorado, will be an important and critical addition to the educational programs in Montezuma County and the southwest region of Colorado when it opens in Fall 2021. The School of Education is excited to work with the Design Team and the Executive Committee of the Academy in order to support this exceptional and much-needed school.

For years, children from the Ute Mountain Ute community have face many challenges in accessing a culturally responsive educational setting, and the Fort Lewis College School of Education has the motivation and expertise to assist in the development of a positive school environment in the Ute Mountain Ute community. The School will gladly help with start-up grant ideas, anticipated programs and costs, and engage in planning meetings that would be helpful. In particular, many faculty members have provided culturally and linguistically diverse trainings to local educators for many years and would be enthusiastic about providing such workshops next summer 2021, after the school hires their Lead Teachers and School Director and elective teachers.

As the school matures, the School of Education would look forward to providing professional development workshops at the school in culturally and linguistically responsive instructional strategies, ELL student identification, assessment, and progress monitoring best practices, exceptional student services, and school and family partnerships, as well as, placing practicum and student teachers in the school.

As a regional provider of higher education, designated Non-Tribal Native American Serving Higher Education Institution and college that offers the Native American Tuition Waiver, the Fort Lewis College School of Education has a long-standing commitment to building partnerships with tribal communities and to supporting the development of local teachers. Fort Lewis College lies on ancestral Ute territory and we can think of no greater honor than to be part of a charter school devoted to the revitalization of Nuchiu language and culture. The School of Education can foresee this as the beginning of an exceptional, ongoing partnership in which the Fort Lewis College School of Education supports the school through professional development, collaborates with community members and school staff to encourage the next generation of Ute Mountain Ute children, and, perhaps eventually provides pathways for community members to become educators and teach at the Kwiyagatu Community Academy .

The School of Education created such a partnership with the Navajo Nation and Central Consolidated Schools nearly 30 years ago and now we see multiple generations of Navajo, of all ages, coming to Fort

Lewis College and returning to their community to teach and inspire others. We dream of similar partnership with the Ute Mountain Ute and this school is an excellent beginning.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Trujillo

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Dr. Jennifer Trujillo

Dean, School of Education

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